(c) what are the reasons given by the States for their reluctance to implement the Act; and

(d) what action is being taken to enforce this legislation in those States ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMERS AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, as per information available with the Central Government, the Government of Uttar Pradesh has issued orders not to launch cases against traders under the Essential Commodities Act, but to limit action to suspension|confiscation|cancellation of licenses issued under Control Orders of Essential Commodities Act, of traders found indulging in offences of blackmarketing| hoarding of essential commodities. Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi is examining the question of setting up a committee to look into the provisions of various Control Orders issued under the Essential Commodities Act to see whether any Control Order has lost its relevance and could be modified.

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has informed that it had noticed that there was misuse of powers given under the EC Act, which resulted in harassment of traders, by way of initiating cases for small offences, and that the GOI vide its order dated 9-2-88 had observed that action under EC Act, in small cases, caused harassment to traders. It has further informed that in view of abundant availability of essential commodities in the State, there is no need to launch cases against traders, under the EC Act.

The GOI has always maintained that prosecution under EC Act should not be launched in small cases and has issued guidelines to this effect. The GOI would impress upon all States including Uttar Pradesh that basic responsibility to maintain adequate supply of essential commodities lies with the State Governments and the State Governments should take recourse to the penal provisions of the EC Act, whenever the gravity of the offence so demands.

Functioning of Offices connected with Exports on All Seven Days

*248. SYED SIBTEY RAZI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received requests regarding functioning of all Government offices connected with exports in the States and Centre on all seven days of week;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether Government propose to take some action in matter; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The demand is that all Govt. and Semi-Govt. offices connected with exports should work round the clock.

(c) and (d) Cargo handling operations at major sea and airports are already being done seven days a week. Customs clearance facility for export cargo is also available at Delhi and Bombay airports for extended hours on regular basis. Government is favourably inclined to provide these facilities at other major air and sea routes.

Coal Mine Projects

*249. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of coal mines projects in different sectors in mixed economy;

(b) what are the State-wise|Sector-wise details thereof;